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ORIGINAL United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

January 28, 2003

The Honorable Michael Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

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Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary

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Dear Chairman Powell,

The Federal Communications Commission has concluded its public comment period regarding media ownership rules. As the Commission considers its course of action with respect to these rules, we urge you to support the public interest in diverse media ownership.

Throughout our tenures as Chairman and Ranking Member of the Antitrust Subcommittee, we have expressed concern with the possible impact of media consolidation on how Americans receive their news, information, and entertainment. Because mass media disseminate the news, information, and entertainment Americans need to participate fully in our democratic society, sound competition policy and the First Amendment interest in promoting the maximum diversity of expression support promoting multiple ownership of these mass media outlets.

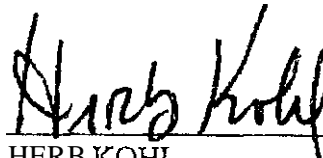
A robust democracy depends upon media sources that offer diverse and independent voices and opinions to citizens. Over the years, courts have endorsed – and logic supports – the notion that more diverse media ownership most likely leads to more diverse media voices. While consolidation may lead to some economic efficiencies, the Commission must carefully weigh any potential efficiencies against the fundamental and real need to protect the ability of citizens to access differing views on news and public affairs.

We are concerned about any significant relaxation to the current media ownership rules that the Commission might be considering. During the upcoming Congress, we plan to continue monitoring the Commission's ongoing rulemaking process to ensure the Commission adequately considers the issues we outline in this letter and the concerns we have noted over the past several years. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact our offices if you have any questions or wish to discuss the matter further.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



MIKE DeWINE  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Antitrust, Business Rights, and  
Competition



HERB KOHL  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Antitrust, Business Rights, and  
Competition

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